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meaning, that our open-minded liberalism will become more of a reality, and our public-mindedness will have more specific content if in some way these two foci are bound together with what might be called world-mindedness.

If there is any one thing of which I am sure,—and I go all about this country, north and south, east and west, and have unusual opportunities for conferring with all types and groups of people in most of our communities—if there is any one thing of which I am sure, it is that the American people today are ready and willing to accept their normal obligations to the rest of mankind.

Fellow citizens, think of the conditions of the world tonight. There is no time to discuss it. Think of Russia. Think of the Balkans. Think of the two assassinations, one in England and one in Germany, within the last two or three days. Think of the curiously opposed influences which are being brought to bear upon these various governments. Think of the fact that in this country we have the fundamentalist movement, making fun of the sound and great scientific conclusions of our best schools of thought and teaching today; and, correspondingly, think of the anti-Christian movement in the Orient, because of the unduly orthodox point of view of many of those who are supposedly friends of Russia. Think of the fact that transportation is disrupted, and that life in general is disorganized. Think of the exchange. Think of France spending twice her

income. Think of the fact that Italy is spending three times her income. Think that, with the single exception of Great Britain, there is not a solvent nation in Europe today, and then remember that the future prosperity of America depends upon the peace of central Europe, and if we are to get anywhere in international commerce or in the diplomacy in world relationships, or in the shape of a normal and sane civilization, we must come into the right relationship with all the world. It cannot be otherwise.

The new American must be open-minded, and he must be public-minded, but these two things will become significant just in proportion as he is world-minded.

I am sorry to have talked so long. I hope I have said enough to you to indicate that we simply begin the task which you must complete, which all through the years you must take and carry on in a large way, relative to the education of the people; that you must help the citizens of America to understand their local, state, national and world problems, and to do it, not through a superficiality of thought, but by a demand for facts which you can supply; by understanding the responsibilities of citizenship, and, above all, by some realization of the fact that the ultimate distinctions between human beings are not the lines and the boundaries of the nation, but those things which come because of their appreciation of the things of the spirit, of the things which are eternal.

A.L.A. PUBLICATIONS THE POLICY OF THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

By HILLER C. WELLMAN, *Librarian, City Library Association, Springfield, Massachusetts;*
Chairman, Editorial Committee

SECOND GENERAL SESSION

It always has been, and I am sure always will be the primary aim of whatever board or committee has the publishing in charge, to divine and satisfy, so far as possible, the wishes and needs of the library workers throughout the country. For this reason the policy has perhaps been, to a degree, opportunist; and by the same token, such a discussion as has been arranged for today is particularly welcome.

The last time the subject was presented for general consideration was at the council meeting in Chicago in 1917. Henry E. Legler, who gave so much of his interest and effort to the affairs of the Publishing Board, told of its modest beginnings some thirty-five years ago, and rightly ascribed much of its success to its early members. They included such men as James L. Whitney, W. I. Fletcher, William C. Lane, Melvil Dewey,

C. A. Cutter, R. R. Bowker, and Charles C. Soule. In those days, and for many years afterward, much of the work was on a volunteer or co-operative basis. Part of the actual compiling and editing was paid for in the case of some of the larger publications like the *Portrait index* and the *A.L.A. catalog*, and the printed catalog cards were similarly prepared; but in general, all the members of the board and many members of the Association gave lavishly of their time and labor. William C. Lane, in particular, during the period of his chairmanship was indefatigable and devoted to the work an immense amount of his personal attention and thought.

The activities of the board, which started in 1886 with a capital of \$458, received a large impetus when in 1902 Mr. Carnegie, through the representations of Dr. Billings, became so interested that he gave an endowment of \$100,000 "for the preparation and publication of reading lists, indexes, and other bibliographical and literary aids."

During the twenty years previous to 1917, as Mr. Legler pointed out, the sales increased from \$2,558 to \$12,554. It has required only five years more almost to double the latter figure, for the sales last year amounted to about \$24,000.

A definite change in policy resulted last year in abolishing the old Publishing Board and substituting an Editorial Committee. With the growth of the Association and the establishment of headquarters, not only the business of printing, advertising, and distributing publications, but the preparing, compiling, and editing was given over more and more to the Association's secretary and his staff, some of whom were employed by the Publishing Board. Now, under the new constitution, the Editorial Committee acts in a frankly advisory capacity; and the actual editorial work, as well as the publishing, has been formally transferred to the secretary and staff under the general direction of the Executive Board. This change represents a natural evolution from the earlier stage of volunteer and co-operative work into that of a regular publishing business, and it may well mark the beginning of an era of even more rapid expansion.

Among recent tendencies which are perhaps indicative of policy would seem to be especial attention to the requirements of the smaller public libraries. This is probably but a reflection of the growth and enlargement of the public library system. Increasing emphasis is perhaps given also to the requirements of the library schools, and this, too, is a natural result of their growing number and influence. If the particular requirements of the university and special libraries have not been so well supplied, the reason doubtless lies in the greater difficulty of preparing the necessary publications, their more limited field of distribution, and the fact that the Carnegie endowment was given primarily for the benefit of the public circulating libraries.

Until recently there existed a feeling, perhaps amounting to a policy, that it was the special province of the board to issue useful works from which the financial returns were so doubtful that the regular publishers would be unlikely to undertake the publication. Indeed, it was even said that profitable publications should be left for the commercial publishers, although I doubt whether the board was often deterred from issuing a work through fear that it might become a best seller and yield substantial returns. Certainly, if the policy of taking up only unprofitable publications were adhered to, the number that could be issued would be extremely limited. At all events, there seems to be a change of policy in this respect, and in view of the growth in the number of libraries I think the feeling is coming to prevail that, with certain exceptions, publications which would not yield sufficient returns to pay at least the cost of printing and distribution are hardly worth while. But the cost of gathering material, compiling, and editing must in many cases still be met, in part at least, from the funds of the Association rather than from sales. Formerly, and especially in the earlier years when the work was largely co-operative, prices were usually set at a figure that would hardly more than cover the cost of paper and printing. A question that may well be discussed, however, is whether now that the work is so largely on a paid basis, publications should

not be listed, when feasible, at a price sufficient to cover also the cost of preparation, and perhaps even to yield enough profit to build up gradually a reserve fund to make possible the publication of occasional expensive works, the returns from which would pay little more than the cost of printing, and the preparation of which could otherwise hardly be financed.

In this connection there is another point upon which I should be glad to hear an expression of opinion. Should the Association pay royalties to the authors of its publications? In the past, as already stated, persons were sometimes engaged and paid for compiling some of the larger publications; and in the case of one or two important works by a single author, after the sales had paid the cost of publishing, a modest royalty was paid out of the accruing profits. The question has been raised whether, for any publication in which the labor of authorship is extensive, especially if undertaken at the request of the Association, the Association should not pay a royalty and fix a correspondingly higher sale price. It is argued that the libraries which purchase a substantial publication could afford to pay a moderate reward for authorship; and that this financial reward, small though it might be, would prove an additional incentive in the production of useful publications.

One function which the board, as a matter of policy, always stood ready to perform is to safeguard the libraries against exploitation. If a publisher should issue a necessary library tool at an unreasonable price, he would always be in danger of arousing the competition of the Publishing Board. Perhaps from this very fact the occasion has never arisen.

A question of policy which has often been discussed by members of the Association has had to do with what is perhaps our most important publication, *The Booklist*. Members of the Association and members of the board have wished that this valuable periodical could fill a larger field and reach general readers as well as librarians. One special field which *The Booklist* can enter, and is increasingly entering, is that of the public school; but after much thought and

effort and actual experiment and tests the members of the Publishing Board were reluctantly convinced that *The Booklist* in its present form, which seems that best suited for librarians, is not attractive to general readers. The librarian wants in the notes concise statements of fact that will enable him, with the least effort and expenditure of time, to determine whether the book is desirable for purchase. General readers, on the contrary, wish, not a cold statement as to whether the book is worth reading, but a note that itself will be pleasurable to read and that will arouse their interest in the book or the subject.

This is not the place to recite the accomplishment of the Association in its publishing. Such works as Larned's *Literature of American history*, the *Portrait index*, the *A.L.A. Catalog* and supplements, the *Index to general literature*, the *Guide to reference books*, the *A.L.A. manual*, *The Booklist*, and scores and scores of other publications are a source of legitimate pride. In general, the publications seem to fall roughly in three groups—first, those dealing with the administration and technique of libraries, such as the handbooks, manuals, cataloging codes, etc., etc.; second, indexes, buying lists, and various other bibliographical aids; and finally, material for library propaganda and publicity, including the brief reading lists and reading courses to be purchased by libraries in quantity for distribution.

A glance at the list of recent publications would indicate that special emphasis has of late been placed on the development of this co-operative printing of lists, reading courses, and other publicity material. It seems to me that it should be possible to develop this branch of the work to a very much larger degree than heretofore. Personally, I should like to see the policy adopted of issuing these lists at the bare cost of printing until libraries generally have acquired the habit of buying them. The very practical suggestions which Mr. Milam has issued for utilizing the different lists have been admirable, and if followed cannot fail to stimulate present patrons and attract new readers to the library. Of many of these lists, although they seem excellently suited to their purpose, there have

been sold only a few thousand copies. This is a ridiculously small sale considering the number of public libraries in the country. Of almost any popular list of this kind there ought to be sold at least fifty or a hundred thousand copies.

The reading courses, which are a new venture, seem an especially useful form of publication. I hope they may be multiplied to include not only vocational, but also academic subjects, so that a studious reader who wants to take up some phase of science, literature, history, or art may find at hand a suitable guide arranged by an expert. The reading courses differ in their aim from the mere reading lists; they should enable libraries to take a new step forward in encouraging systematic and ordered reading. This service might ultimately develop into something almost akin to the work of the correspondence school, and judging by the vogue of the latter, would be appreciated by numerous readers eager for self-education.

As already stated with regard to the policy of subsidizing publications, there are exceptional works which might well be issued even if they would hardly pay printing and "overhead" costs, to say nothing of the cost of compilation or authorship. Among these exceptions I should place, for the present, the brief lists and reading courses, which should be offered at the bare cost of printing until their sale in large quantities has become established. They represent, in the main, a new enterprise, and a new enterprise often requires the sinking of capital in promotion. Another class of publications which might constitute an exception comprises those for which, while the sale would be limited, the

need is great. Among these I may note the lists of books in foreign languages. The work of Americanization is so important, and the difficulties of building up the necessary book collections are so great, that I think the publication of additional lists of this kind would be warranted even if the returns would hardly pay the expense of printing. The great difficulty in the past has been to find persons combining the requisite knowledge of the foreign literature with the right understanding of the purpose of the list—an obstacle, however, which surely is not insurmountable.

There is one other class of publications which I hope to see undertaken regardless of the financial returns. The public library system, which had its birth almost within the memory of the older members of this Association, has grown and spread until it has taken its place beside the public school as one of the indispensable institutions of democracy. In years to come students will want to know the origin of this new force. The men and women who fostered and guided this great movement were known to many of the members who are still active in this Association. We shall fail in our duty, if we who knew these figures neglect to record for posterity something of their personalities as well as their achievements and their special contributions to the development of public libraries. Already a series of brief biographies of these men and women has been planned, and the copy for one has actually been written. I hope that, as a matter of policy, the Association will not fail to carry this project to worthy completion.

A.L.A. PUBLICATIONS NEEDS NOT YET FULFILLED

By H. M. LYDENBERG, *Reference Librarian, New York Public Library*

SUMMARY. SECOND GENERAL SESSION

Although I was not limited by any stipulations that my suggestions should be financially possible, I realize that the activities of the Editorial Committee are dependent very largely on the amount of money available.

It is unfortunate, as some of us look at it,

that aside from the activities of the first few years of the A.L.A., the needs of the reference and college and university libraries have not had greater consideration.

The Publishing Board had to choose and we all of us agree that it chose wisely, but it is unfortunate that we have had to see so